逢縁カタルシス
大島かもめ
AIEN
CATHARSIS
presented by
kamome oshima
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AIEN CATHARSIS

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【 Chapter 1 】

A I E N C A T H A R S I S

by kamome oshima

October, Year 12 of the Taisho Era.

Osaka.

KONDOU...

YES?

...

BEEN 'BOUTTA MONTH SINCE YOU MOVED HERE FROM TOKYO.

SETTLED IN TA OSAKA QUITE YET?

YA AIN'T GOT NUTTIN' TA WORRY 'BOUT WIT' ME. I'M GETTIN' ON BY.

NO NEED TA PUSH YERSELF.

One month ago, at Inamiya Apothecary.

WEL-COME.

THAT THE MAN YOU SPOKE OF?

YES.

COME ON IN, YOSHI-ZUMI-SAN.

I WAS EXPECTIN' YOU.

SORRY TA BOTHER YOU WHEN YER SO BUSY, INAMI-SAN.

HOPE YOU DON'T MIND MYSELF COMIN' THROUGH THE FRONT HERE.

I'M KONDOU.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

NAME'S KONDOU SHOUTA.

WE WERE JUST SHORT ON STAFF TOO, SO I'M GRATEFUL TA HAVE A YOUNG MAN JOIN OUR CREW.

I HEARD IT WAS QUITE A CATASTRO-PHE OVER THERE.

HE USED TA BE A CHAUFFEUR IN TOKYO,

BUT AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE AND EVERYTHIN', HE'S IN NEED OF SOME WORK.

WHAT?

NOTH-ING...

...

BUT I SURE HOPE YOU DON'T DISAPPOINT OLD MAN YOSHIZUMI-SAN.

YER PROBABLY STILL NOT USED TA THESE WATERS,

I'M THE HEAD OF THIS GROUP, INAMI RYUUJI.

HM?
OKAY.
WELL, AS LONG AS YOU DO YER BEST AND HAVE A LIL' OF THAT GOOD, OLD-FASHIONED GRIT,
YOU'LL FIT RIGHT IN.
YER FIRST TIME HERE, BOY?
THERE'S A NEW FACE.
MY NAME IS KONDOU...
YES...

SO, YOU WANNA TAKE THAT CAR AND FIX'ER UP IN THE BACK.

KONDOU, WAS IT?

A CAR WIT' THE LUGGAGE IS GONNA BE PARKED THERE SOON,

ALL RIGHT!

NITTA-SAN, WE NEED YOU OVER HERE!

...FIX HER UP?

I'M COMING!

Nitta-san!

Thank you very much.

YOU SAID TO FIX HER UP.
BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHICH PART NEEDED FIXING, SO I THOUGHT I WOULD TAKE HER APART TO CHECK EVERY PART.
WH-
WHAT IN THE BLAZES ARE YA DOIN'?!
YOU...
SCATTERED
YOU KNOW HOW TA PUT'ER BACK, DON'T CHA?
NOT AT ALL.
YOU KNUCKLE-HEAD!
WHEN I SAID TA FIX'ER UP, I MEANT TA PUTT'ER IN THE BACK!
THIS AIN'T EVEN FIXIN' HER! THIS IS DESTROYIN' HER!
What happened?
What's all the fuss?

MASTER!

TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!

KONDOU DID THIS!

WHEN I TOLD HIM TA FIX'ER UP, HE MUST'A HEARD ME WRONG...

MESS

WHAT'S ALL THE HUBBUB?

YES.

KON-DOU...

DIDJA THINK "FIX'ER UP" MEANT, TO REPAIR HER?

TH-

IN THESE WATERS, WHEN WE SAY "F.X'ER UP," WE MEAN TO CLEAN IT UP OR PUT IT AWAY.

...

I SEE.

NOTHING TO BE DONE, NOW.

SO, THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED DUE TO A CULTURAL DISCONNECT.

Rein it in, Nitta-san!

Hold your horses!

KONDOU.

YOU THINK...

YOU CAN SAY THAT?!

NITTA-SAN?!

AUGH!

DSH

I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE FOR EARLIER.
WHY DIDN'TCHA JUST SAY SO EARLIER?
MASTER...
DON'T WORRY, WE'LL CALL A MECHANIC TA "FIX" HER.
ABOUT THE CAR...
ME?
BECAUSE YOU WANTED ME TO HAVE SOME "GRIT."
SO, I THOUGHT I WOULD TRY TACKLING IT.
I wanted to be capable of fixing a car.
ANYWAYS, WHY'D YOU TRY TO DO THAT IF YOU D.D'NT KNOW HOW TA FIX CARS?
BECAUSE YOU...

I CAN'T TELL IF YER HONEST,
OR DIM-WITTED...

?

WHAT?
I JUST THOUGHT YOU HAD AN UNUSUALLY PRETTY FACE.
NO...
YOU KEEP STARING AT ME.
DO I REM.ND YOU OF SOME-ONE?

I GET IT.

YER JUST A SIMPLETON WHO KNOWS HOW TA DRIVE.

I WOULD BE ASKIN' TOO MUCH, TO ASK PEOPLE LIKE YOU TO TRY TA ARTICULATE YOURSELVES.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "UNUSUAL?"

That sure don't sound like a compliment.

MY APOLO-GIES.

YOU CAN'T...

...KEEP LOOKIN' LIKE A SOURPUSS.

FOR A SIMPLETON LIKE YOU TA SURVIVE IN THE WORLD,

YOU GOTTA HAVE CHARM!

IT'S AN AB-SOLUTE NECES-SITY!

BE MORE ENER-GETIC!

AND MAKE THE FOLKS AROUND YOU LAUGH!

BECOME A LOVEABLE IDIOT!

MASTER...

YOU DON'T WANT TO FIRE ME?

AND YOU CAN'T VERY WELL SHOW YER FACE TO YOSHIZUMI-SAN AFTER THAT.

YES...

AND YOU'VE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO, RIGHT?

I DON'T CAN MY FOLKS AFTER JUST ONE MISTAKE.

OKAY.

DON'T BE THINKIN' YOU CAN RUN THAT MOUTH OFF WILLY-NILLY.

IN RETURN,

YOU BETTER WORK YER ASS OFF.

RELAX.

THAT HONESTY OF YERS IS GONNA COME IN HANDY.

I'LL SEE YOU LATER.

WORK HARD.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

IS ANYONE FREE TA HELP ME?

I NEED'TA GET THIS TO THE STOR-AGE HOUSE.

NITTA-SAN...

I CAN HELP YOU WITH THAT.

NO THANKS.

YOU'LL JUST MAKE A MESS'A THINGS.

OH NO, IT'S MY FAULT FOR NOT BEING MORE FRIENDLY.

HE'S A D FFICULT MAN TA DEAL WITH ONCE YOU'VE UPSET H.M.

NITTA-SAN IS JJST A LITTLE HARD-HEADED.

DON'T TAKE IT TA HEART, KONDOU-SAN.

THE MASTER DD THAT?

BUT...

You probably shouldn't...

THE MASTER'S BEEN WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES,

TRYING TA DEFEND YOU AGA.NST HIM, BUT HE'S NOT BUDGIN'.

I FORGOT TO SMILE.

HOW S THIS?

SWEAT

NITTA-SAN DOESN'T SEEM TO HOLD THE MASTER IN HIGH REGARD,

AFTER THE MISSUS RAN OUT ON HIM.

HUSH!

HE'S MARRIED?

YES, YOU COULD SAY SO.

THAT'S NOT SOMETHING WE SHOULD SPEAK ABOUT...

PLEASE DON'T SAY WE SAID NUTTIN'.

OKAY...

...

I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT.

YOU'VE BROUGHT US TO A SPLENDID ESTABLISH-MENT, INAMI-SAN!

LOVELY!

DON'T TAKE TOO LONG!

SURE THING.

EXCUSE ME WHILE I...

...GO TO THE WASH-ROOM.

Haha.

Hoho.

WHAT IS HE WRITING...
...SO FERVENTLY?
INAMI-SAMA.

How's about we leave such a droll place?
Oh no, I'm fine.
HAH
I SEE YER WORK NG HARD, THERE.

WHAT ARE YOU WRITING SO DILIGENTLY?

MASTER.

YES, I'M USING THEM AS PAPER.

THOSE ARE NEWSPAPER SCRAPS.

HUH?

I WROTE DOWN A JOKE I HEARD DURING MY BREAK TIME.

YEAH.

"LAUGH AND CLAP AT 'NOW I AM SCARED OF BITTER TEA'?"

AND YER USING SUCH A SMALL PENCIL.

OH?
YOU LOOKIN' TA GET INTO COMEDY?
NO.
BECAUSE YOU TOLD ME TO BECOME AN IDIOT THAT CAN MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH.
SO, I AM STUDYING UP.
...
BUT IT'S QUITE DIFFICULT.

I AN'T MAKIN' FUN OF YOU OR NOTHIN'.
OH, I'M SORRY.
PFT!

I MAY'VE MADE A MISTAKE.
YOU ARE FINE,
JUST THE WAY YOU ARE.

Please visit again.

ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

YEAH.

KONDOU.

YOU M.ND STOPPIN' BY THAT STATIONERY STORE?

OF COURSE.

SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG.

NO WORRIES.

TAKE THESE.
KONDOU.
FLT
FLT

SO, USE THESE.
READIN' THAT WRIT.NG ON NEWSPAPER SCRAPS MUST BE A HELLUVA .NCONVENIENCE, AM I RIGHT?

A DIL.GENT MAN.
I WILL BE SURE TO TAKE GREAT CARE OF THEM.
...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

To be continued

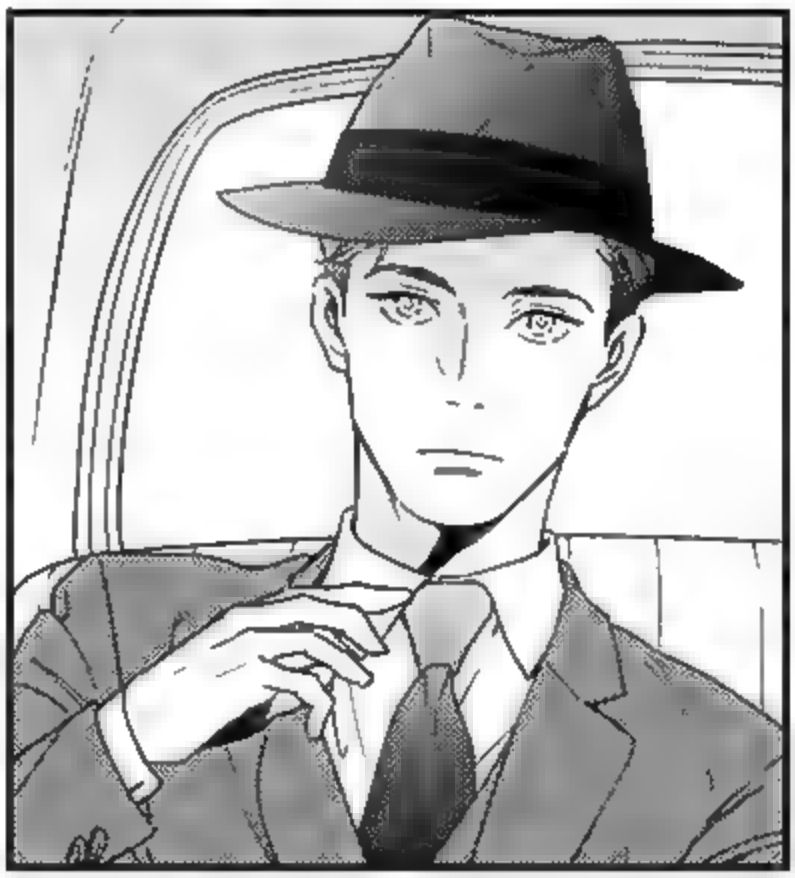
*T/N: SO SORRY FOR BUTCHERING ANY ACCENTS

伊波
I WILL SEE YOU AGA.N NEXT MONTH.
THEN...

KONDOU.
YEAH.
EVERY SECOND MONDAY OF THE MONTH,
WE'RE TO VISIT THE PREV.OUS HEAD'S HOME TO REPORT ON THIS MONTH'S BUS.NESS. REMEMBER THAT.
YES?
...
TO BE HONEST, IT'S AN UNPLEAS-ANT DUTY,
ALL R.GHT.

HA HA
BUT HAVING HIM THERE AT THE MAIN RESIDENCE COMES WITH ITS OWN BOATLOAD OF PROBLEMS.

BY THE WAY...

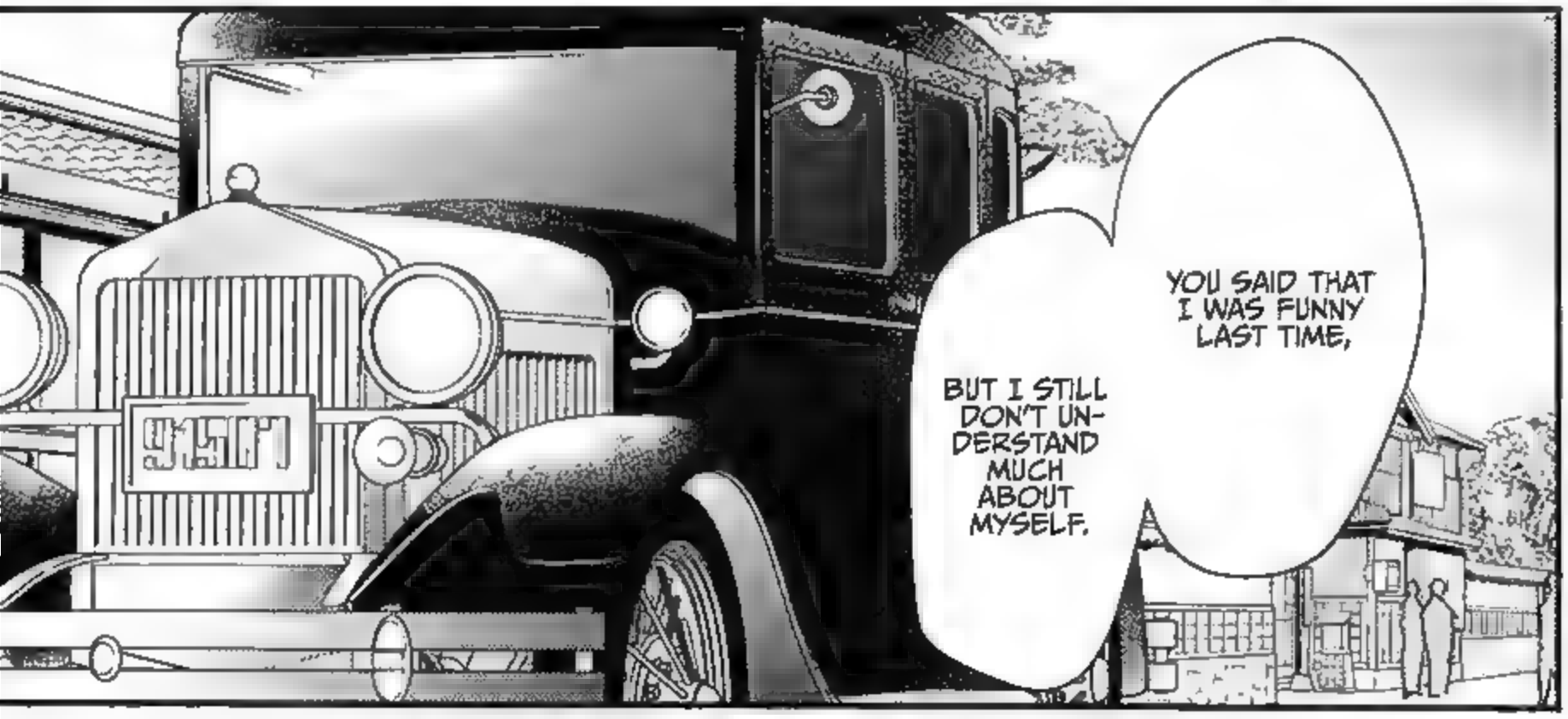


I HAVE...

HOW ARE YER JOKES COMIN' ALONG?
MADE ANY PROG-RESS YET?

OH, YOU STOPPED WITH THE JOKES?

...REPUR-POSED IT INTO A JOURNAL.


YOU SAID THAT I WAS FUNNY LAST TIME,
BUT I STILL DON'T UN-DERSTAND MUCH ABOUT MYSELF.

SO, I THOUGHT I M.GHT LEARN SOMETHING IF I RECORD MY DAY-TO-DAY LIFE.

AND THERE'S NO MORE BUSINESS FER ME TO SEE TODAY. HOW'S ABOUT WE TAKE A TRIP TO TAKASHIMAYA?

IT'S NOT EVEN TWO YET.

I AM STILL UNFAMILIAR WITH THE ROADS THERE.

LET ME CHECK THE MAP.

MY APOLOGIES.

SKRT

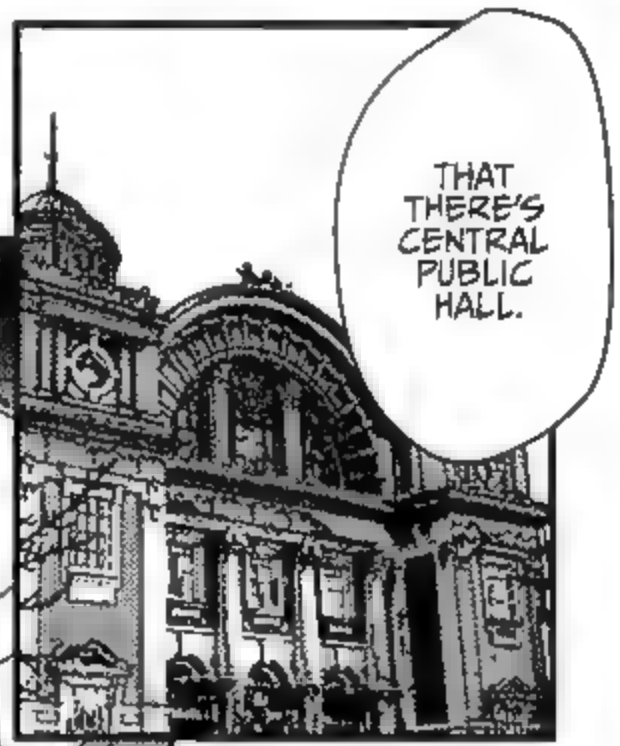
SORRY, I'LL BE QUICK.

SURE THING.

SWITCH W.TH ME.
I'M SORRY.
KONDOU,
GET OUT.
HUH?
I'LL DRIVE.

...
Rrr...

THERE'S THE LIBRARY.


THAT THERE'S CENTRAL PUBLIC HALL.

BANK OF JAPAN'S BRANCH.

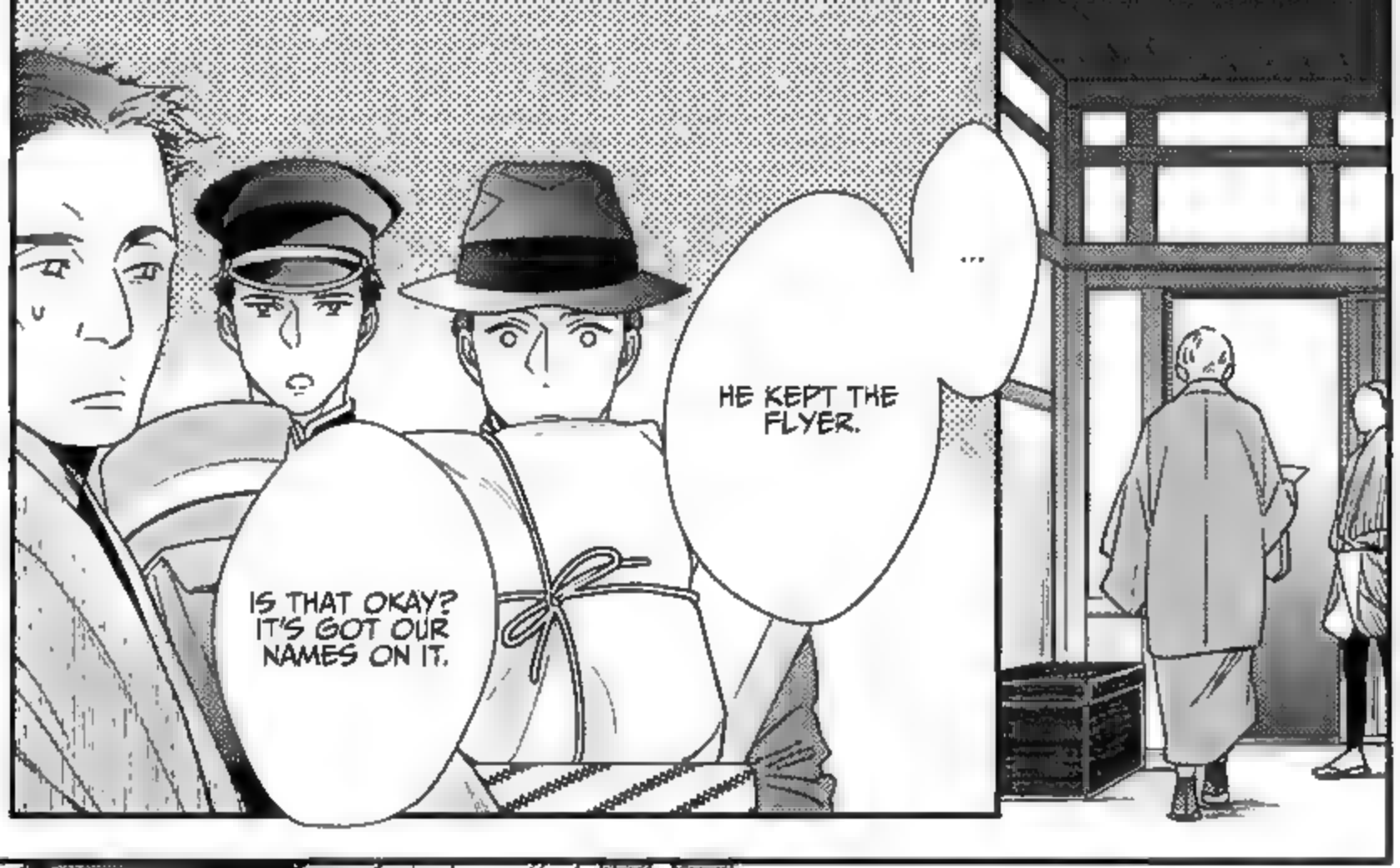
...
YOU CAN DRIVE?

WE'RE HEADIN' TA TAKASHIMAYA, SO BE SURE TA COMMIT THAT TO YER MEMORY.
BACK WHEN I WAS STILL THE MANAGER, I WOULD DRIVE THE PREVIOUS HEAD AROUND ON HIS PLEASURE TRIPS.
YEAH, I DO QUITE ALRIGHT, DON'T I?
OF COURSE, I APPRECIATE IT.

WE'RE BACK.
YER BACK LATE...
WHAT?!
WELCOME BACK, YOUNG MASTER.
I HAVEN'T BEEN .N A WHILE, SO THERE WERE A QUITE A FEW TH NGS I WANTED TA PICK UP.
FLAP
WE HAPPENED TA SW NG BY TAKASHIMAYA.
WHAT'S ALL THOSE PACKAGES?

OH!
TAKA-SHIMAYA, YOU SAY?
FLAP
FLAP
W-WE HAD TIME,
SO, WE DROPPED IN!
FLUTTER
auty of a Hundred
owers Serving You Tea
CAFÉ
Inami-San & Kondou-San! I hope to see you two again! Kimiko
AH!
YOUNG MASTER ...
YOU DRAGGED KONDOU IN WITH YOU?!
KONDOU SAID HE'D NEVER BEEN TA THAT SORTA PLACE,
AN' I FIGUR'ED HE COULD LEARN A THING OR TWO THERE.
AN' SHE EVEN WROTE A MESSAGE ON .T FER YOU...
THIS IS...
THIS IS THE LEGENDARY, HIGHLY-COVETED, LIMITED EDITION POSTER O' THEIR NUMBER ONE HOSTESS, EBINA KIMIKO-CHAN!
WHIP
NITTA-SAN?

GET RID OF THOSE.
AHEM.
Hah.
WE DON'T NEED RUMORS FLYING AROUND OF THE YOUNG MASTER INDULGIN' IN SUCH VICES.
AND PLEASE LIMIT YER LOLLY-GAGGING'.
IT DON'T DO TO HAVE THE OTHER STAFF SEEIN' YA LIKE THIS.
PLEASE DO.
SORRY, I'LL BE MORE CAREFUL.
YER RIGHT.


IS THAT OKAY? IT'S GOT OUR NAMES ON IT.
HE KEPT THE FLYER.
...

WHAT A RARE S.GHT, FER THE YOUNG MASTER.
...
OKAY.
THEN LET'S GO BACK.
TAKE THOSE BOXES OVER THERE.

TO BE HONEST, I RECKON .T'S GOOD FER HIM TA CUT LOOSE ONCE IN A WHILE. SO, I FEEL PRETTY DARN GOOD, SEEIN' H.M LIKE THAT.
BUT EVER SINCE HE WAS AN AP-PRENTICE, HE WOULD JUST SAVE UP HIS MONEY,
AND THE PREVIOUS HEAD WOULD PRAISE HIM FOR IT.
AFTER INHERITING THIS STORE, HE SHOULDA BEEN ABLE TA ENJOY PLEA-SURES AND PERKS OF THIS LIFE.

KONDOU

KONDOU

...

TAKE THIS TO NITTA-SAN, AND TELL'IM IT'S FROM YOU.

It's got her signature on it.

YES?

I SNATCHED THIS FROM THE BOXES OF STUFF WE BOUGHT.

NITTA-SAN.

HERE.
WHAT?
IT WAS IN OUR BOXES,
HMM.
I SEE YER SLOWLY LEARNIN' THE WAYS OF THE WORLD.
BUT I BELIEVE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO "TAKE CARE" OF IT,
SO THAT THE OTHER STAFF WON'T FIND IT.

HE LOOKED PLEASED.
Hehehe...
GRIN
THEN I'LL TAKE THIS.
YES,
THANK YOU.

NOW, HE MAY LOOSEN UP AROUND YOU.
I GUESS THOSE RUMORS OF HIM BEING SWEET ON THOSE GIRLS IN THAT CAFÉ...
...WERE TRUE.

Heehee.
BUT JUST SEEING THE DEMONIC NITTA GRIN LIKE THAT...
...WAS WORTH THE TRIP.

HAHA

YOU'RE RIGHT.

HAHAHA.

WOW, NITTA-SAN'S ATT.TUDE TOWARDS YOU HAS CHANGED.

D DJA DO ANYTH NG TA PLEASE HIM?

...NO.

KONDOU,

CAN YA HELP ME WIT' MY INSPECTION IF YER FREE?

SURE.

I DIDN'T DO ANY-TH.NG.

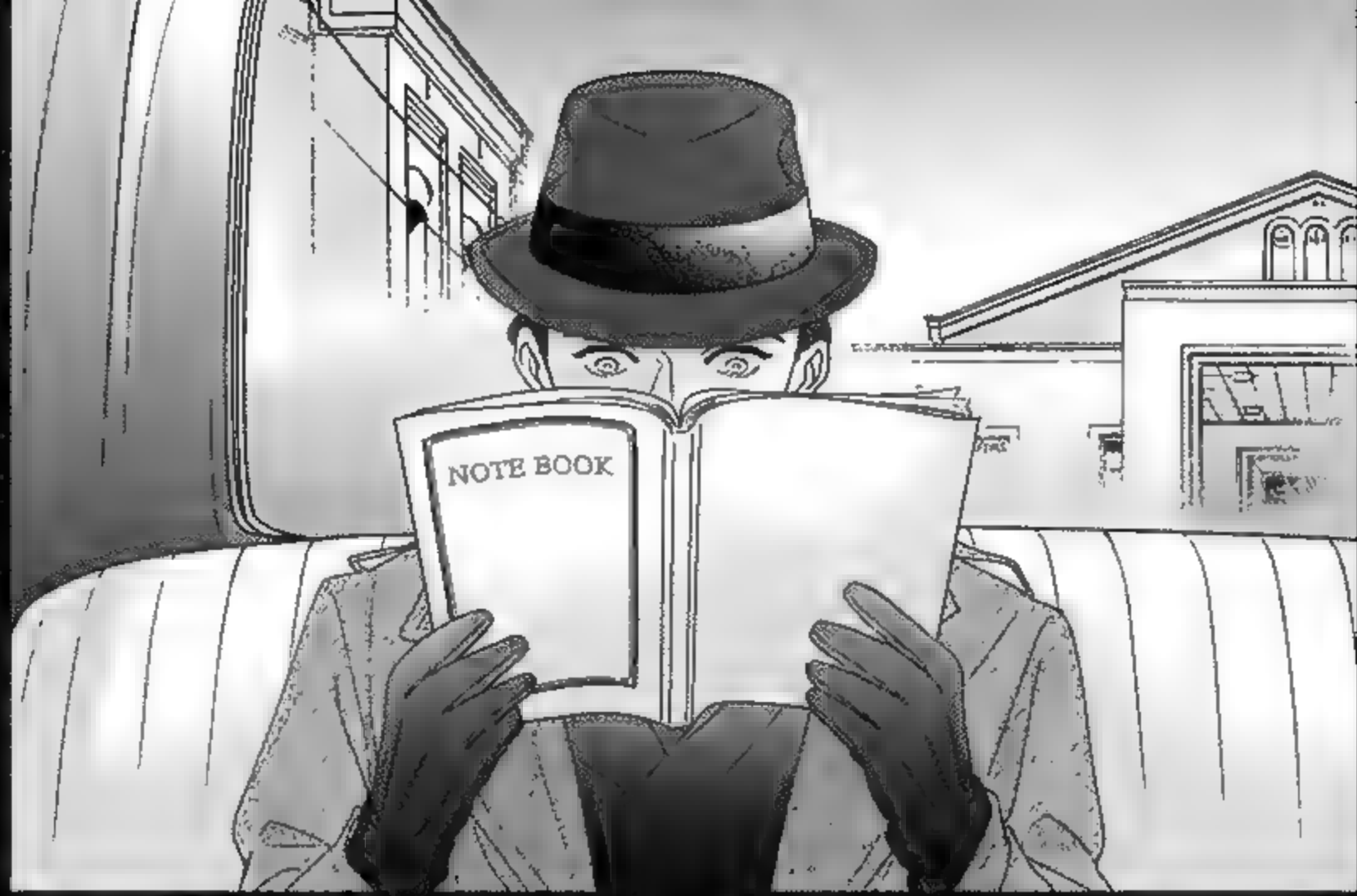
SNOW?

IT'LL BE COLD.

I'M OUT OF GAS FOR THE HEATING PACK.

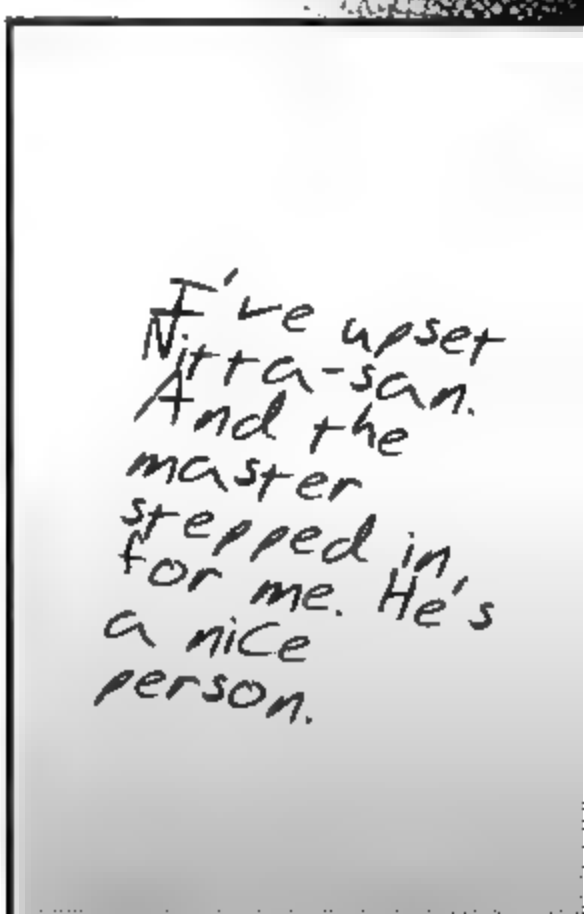
IF YOU WAIT HERE, I CAN GO AND BUY SOME MORE GAS.

NOTE BOOK
...
"I HAVE RE-PURPOSED IT INTO A JOURNAL."
EVEN IF I AM HIS EMPLOYER, I SHOULDN'T BE PEEKIN' IN THERE...
NO...
...
NOTE BOOK


NOTE BOOK

The master gifted me with a notebook and pencils. I am full of thanks for him. I originally wanted to write down jokes, but for some reason, I have changed it to a journal.

While shopping with the master, it seems he likes an indigo grey flannel fabric.


I've upset Itta-san. And the master stepped in for me. He's a nice person.

WHAT, AFTER HE SAID HE WANTED TA UNDERSTAND HIMSELF WITH THIS,
IT'S ALL ABOUT ME.
...
I've recently noticed that when I look at the master,
I was not able to talk to the master today.

It's become difficult to call the feelings I have for the master, "admiration" anymore.

To be continued

【 Chapter 3 】

AIEN CATHARSIS

by kamome oshima

YOUNG MASTER.
HAH.

"KONDOU..."

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

NOTHIN'...

GIVE ME...

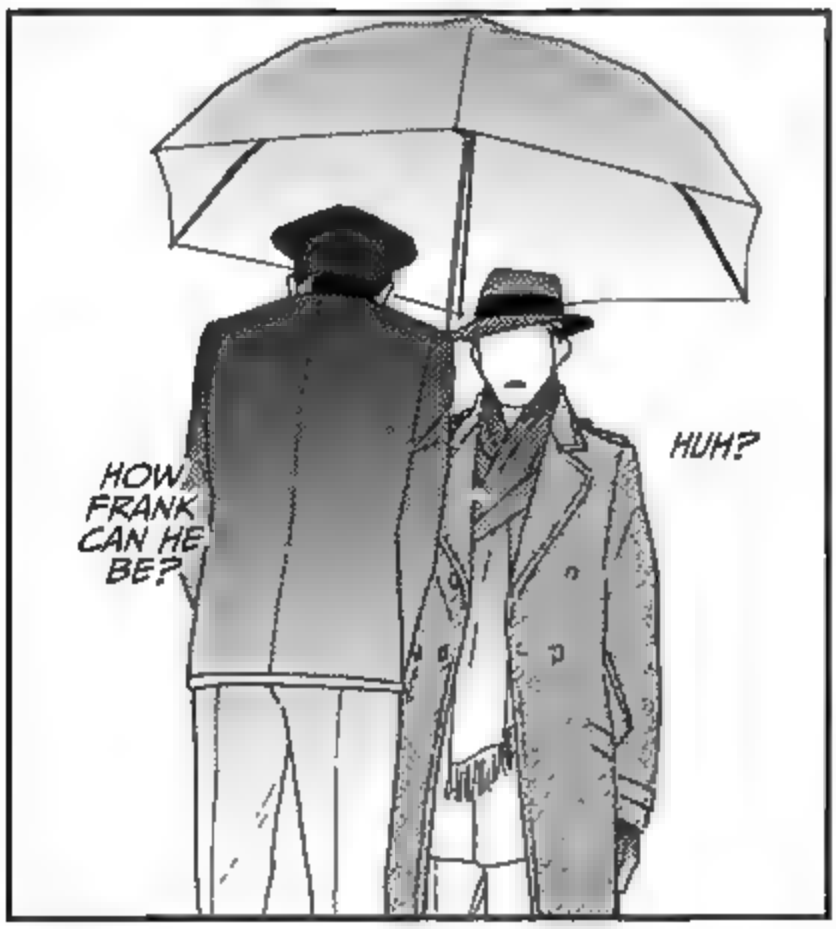
...YOUR HEATING PACK.

OKAY.

KONDOU...

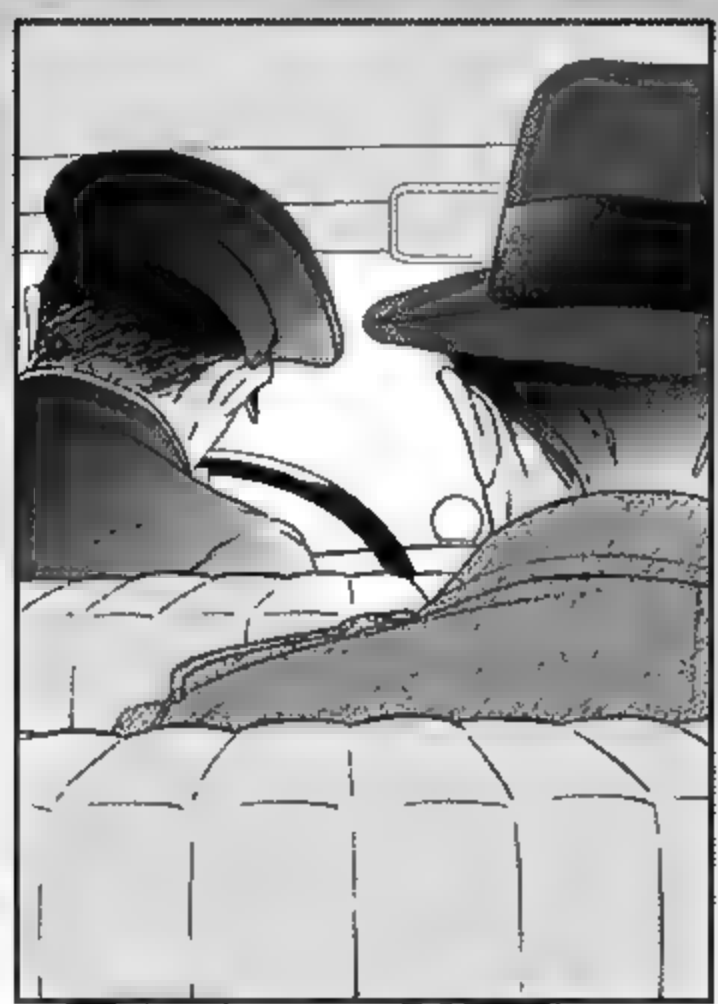
SORRY,
I READ YER JOURNAL.
...
I DON'T MIND.

I DIDN'T WRITE ANYTHING COMPROMISING IN THERE.



OH,
SORRY.
HAH
THE HEATING PACK....

VRRRR!
MASTER.



...CONCERN YOURSELF OVER THE CONTENTS OF MY JOURNAL.
PLEASE DO NOT...

I AM HAPPY RIGHT NOW.
BECAUSE IT MUST MEAN...

...THAT YOU ARE CURIOUS ABOUT ME.

KONDOU...

HIM.

IT'S HIM...

WHO ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

SENGOKU-SAN.

HE'S THERE!

TSUSHIMA!

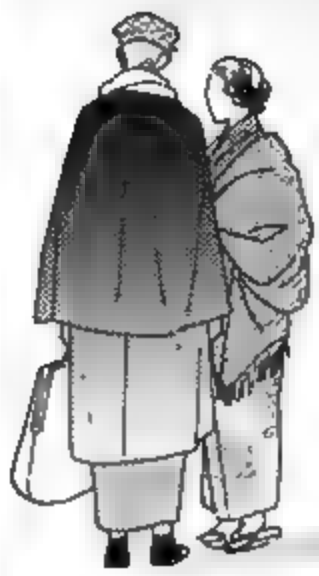
I CHANCED UPON 'IM WHEN I WAS VISITIN' THE HOT SPRINGS!

HE'S WORKIN' AT AN INN IN ARIMA.

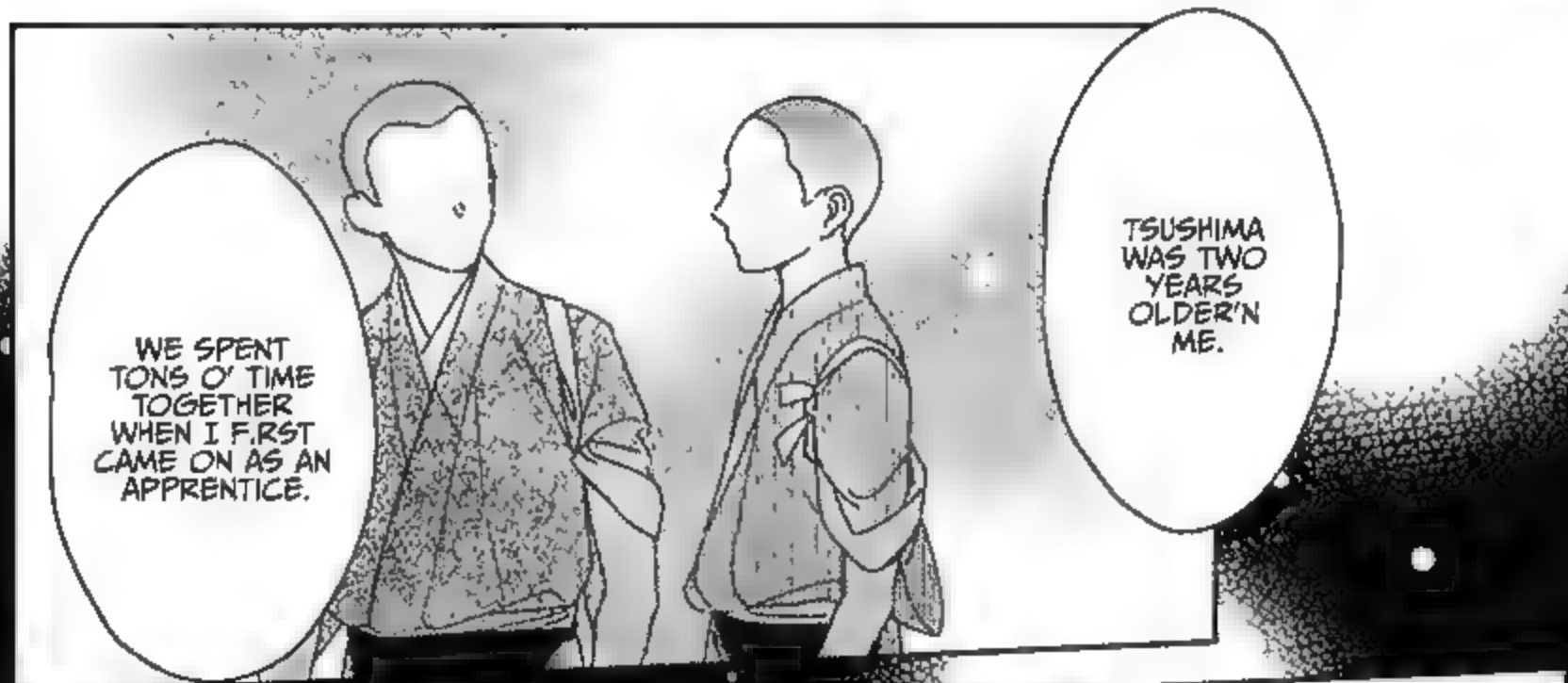
...
I GUESS YOU HEARD FROM THE OTHER FOLKS.
KONDOU...

ABOUT TSUSHIMA.

HE WAS THE LAST MANAGER HERE.
...YES.



I HEARD HE ELOPED WITH YOUR WIFE.


WE SPENT TONS O' TIME TOGETHER WHEN I F.RST CAME ON AS AN APPRENTICE.
TSUSHIMA WAS TWO YEARS OLDER'N ME.

BUT SINCE WE WERE SIMILAR IN AGE, WE EN-COURAGED EACH OTHER AND WERE ABLE TA MAKE IT THROUGH.
THERE WERE D.FFICULT TIMES, WHEN WE WERE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE FOOD CHAIN.

BUT I WONDER WHEN THAT ALL CHANGED.

I'M NOW THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE,

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN US BECAME STRAINED.

BUT TSUSHIMA WAS ACTUALLY MUCH MORE SKILLED THAN ME.

BUT THE MASTER AT THE TIME...

AND I'M TALKIN' ABOUT THE PREVIOUS HEAD... HE FAVORED ME, FOR SOME ODD REASON.

AND THAT UPSET TSUSHIMA.

SO HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS ME GRADUALLY BEGAN TO CHANGE.

BUT I D.DNT' SAY NOTHIN'.

I UNDERSTOOD THAT HE FAVORED ME, BUT I JUST ACCEPTED IT.

BECAUSE MY PARENTS WERE DEAD,

AND I HAD NOWHERE ELSE TA GO.

I WANTED A PLACE TA BELONG.
MY MARRIAGE TO THE DAUGHTER OF THIS HOUSE...
...MUST'A BEEN THE LAST STRAW FOR HIM.
AND THE TWO O' THEM, LEFT THE HOUSE, HAND IN HAND.
HE WAS ALWAYS SWEET ON YORIKO-SAN.

DO YOU SEE NOW?

YER MASTER IS SOMEONE WHO WILL BETRAY HIS OWN PEOPLE FER THE SAKE OF SELF-PRESERVAT.ON.

YORIKO-SAN MAY HAVE BEEN...

...DISINHERITED BY THE PREVIOUS HEAD,

BUT I BELIEVE SHE IS MUCH HAPP.ER WITH THE CHOICE SHE MADE.

...SMITTEN WITH YOU.
YORIKO-SAN WAS...
I HEARD FROM THE LADIES IN THE HOUSE.
...HUH?
THINGS FINALLY MAKE SENSE.
BUT AFTER HEARING THIS,
THAT SHE WAS SOMEONE WHO WAS ALWAYS THINKING OF YOU.
AND THAT THEY WERE SHOCKED WHEN SHE LEFT THE HOUSE WITH TSUSHIMA-SAN.

MASTER...
YOU DO NOT SPEAK OF THIS INCIDENT WITH ANGER, NOR SPITE NOR SADNESS.
I BELIEVE SHE LEFT BECAUSE SHE REALIZED...
...WHAT SHE REALLY MEANT TO YOU. OR YOU COULD SAY, WHAT SHE *DIDN'T*.

AND,

YOU-...

INSTEAD, YOU ARE UNUSUALLY UNNERVED BY TSUSHIMA-SAN'S BETRAYAL.

THE PAIN YOU FEEL FOR THIS INCIDENT STEMS FROM TSUSHIMA-SAN, DOESN'T IT?

MASTER...
AH,
YEAH.
YOU DO NOT HAVE ANY PLANS TOMORROW, R.GHT?

I WILL HAVE THE D.REC-TIONS...

...MEMORIZED BY TOMORROW.

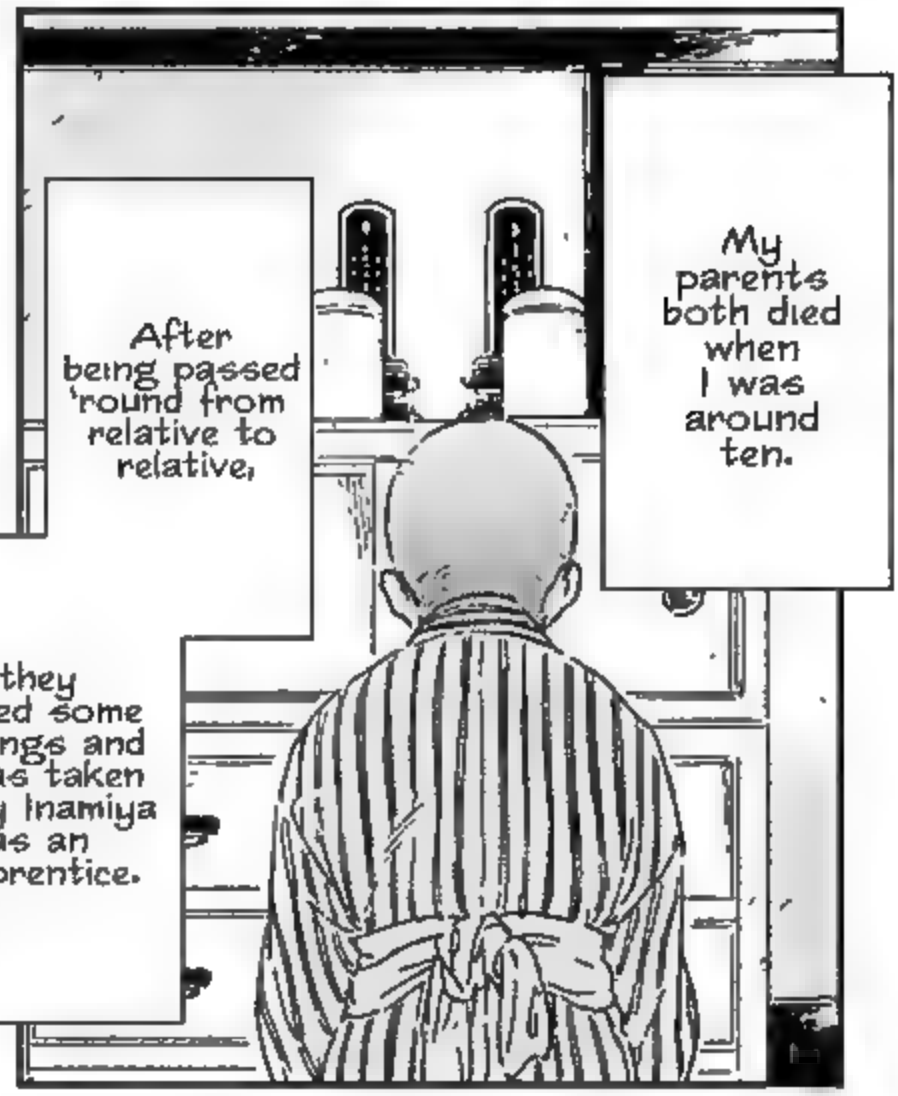
LET'S GO TO ARIMA.

To be continued

【 Chapter 4 】

...on the morning that I was brought to Inamiya.

I saw that man...



At first glance, he looked like an elderly man.

But his body was emaciated. He could have been a young man.

He was hunched over, unmoving...

But I only noticed that he was still alive when I saw his shoulders rise and fall as he drew in short breaths.

There were many people on the streets.

Some looked at him with pity,

others with disgust...

Every type of person was there.

But not a single one approached him.

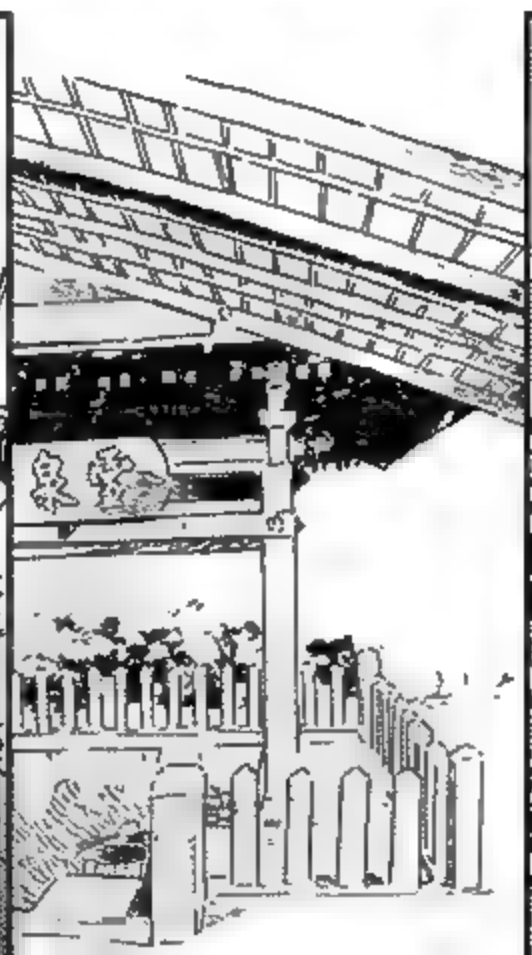
POOR MAN.

RYUUJI-SAN.

APPRENTICESHIP WILL BE TOUGH,

BUT YOU MUST ENDURE.

YOU DON'T WANT TA END UP LIKE HIM NOW, DO YOU?



...

MASTER.

Swept up by Kondou's tenacity,

I have now arrived in Arima.

THAT IS, IF WHAT SENGOKU-SAN SAID WAS TRUE.

IS THIS THE INN THAT TSUSHIMA-SAN IS WORKING AT?

...

THEN I WILL LEAVE YOU HERE.

...YEAH.

EXCUSE ME...

I WILL COME PICK YOU UP TOMORROW.

WHAT?!

WHERE DO YOU THINK YER GOIN'?

HOLD ON THERE.

YER JUST GOING TO LEAVE ME HERE ALONE?

I WILL BE STAYING AT A NEARBY LODGE.

YOU WANT ME TO FACE TSUSHIMA ALL BY MYSELF?

HEY,

I COULD NOT POSSIBLY STAY AT SUCH AN ESTABLISHMENT.

YOU BETTER SEE THIS TO THE VERY END.

YER THE ONE WHO CAME WITH ME ALL THE WAY TA ARIMA.

...

MY APOLOGIES.

I BELIEVE HE WILL RETURN BY TOMORROW.

TSUSHIMA IS CURRENTLY AWAY FOR HIS DUTIES.

I CAN WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW.

OH, THAT'S QUITE ALRIGHT.

IF SIRS ARE IN A HURRY, THEN~

...

Please enjoy yourselves

I GOT ALL WORKED UP FER A DELAY.

AH...

LET'S GO TO THE BATH-HOUSE.

SINCE WE'RE HERE,

...

LET'S GO.

WHY ARE YOU ACTIN' SO STIFF?

IT AIN'T SO BAD TA HAVE YER BACK WASHED.
I FORGOT.
YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED.
...
IT GETS BUSY, THIS TIME O' DAY.
ARE YA THAT INTERESTED IN AN OLD MAN'S CROTCH?

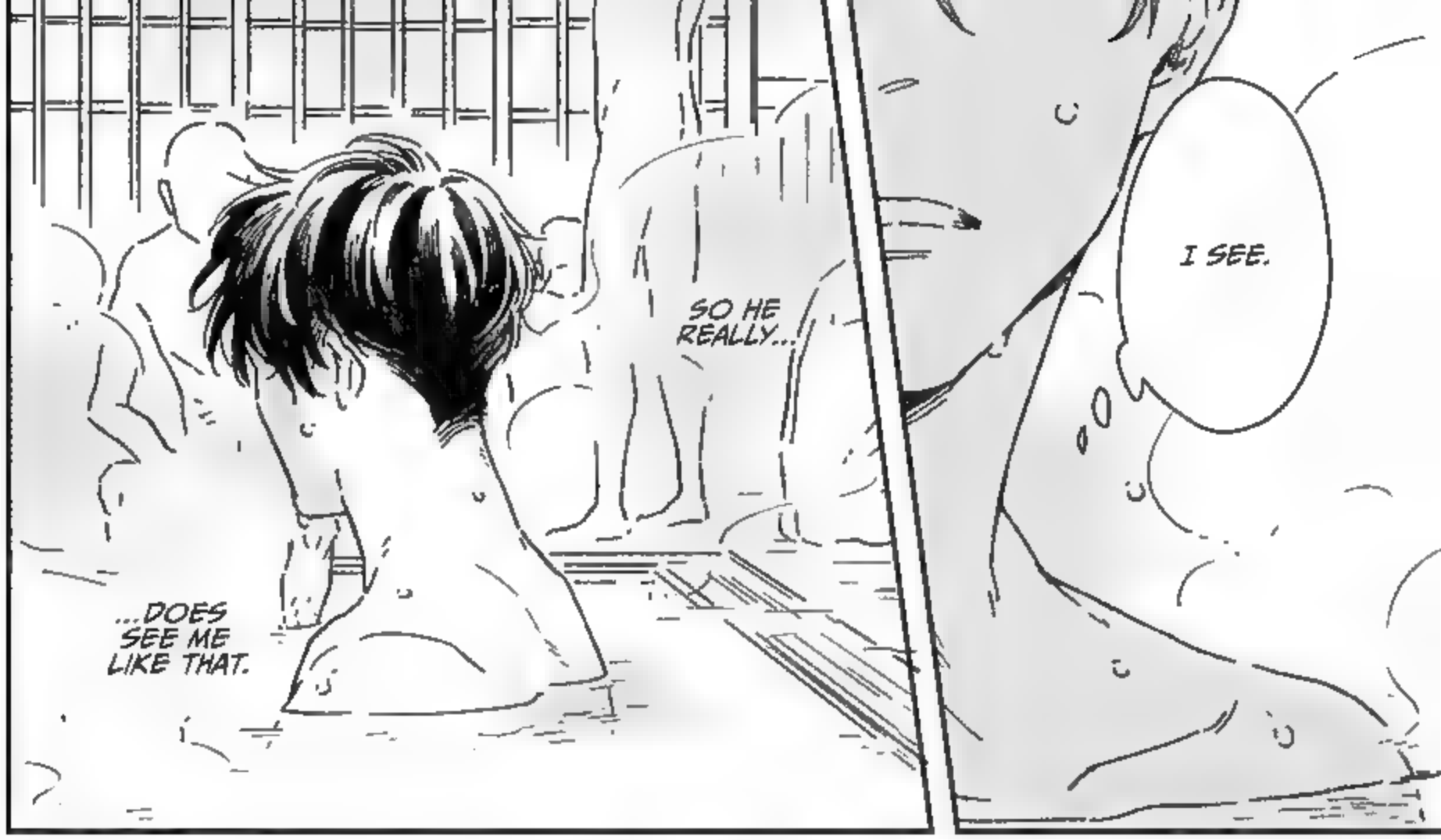
I'M TRYING NOT TO LOOK AT YOU.

KONDOU...

WHY DO YOU KEEP LOOKIN' THAT WAY?

YOU'VE READ WHAT I WROTE IN THE JOURNAL.

YOU SHOULD KNOW WHY.


I SEE.
SO HE REALLY...
...DOES SEE ME LIKE THAT.

...
V-
DON'T TELL ME,
VISITING THE BATHHOUSE ONCE IN A WHILE IS A GOOD EXPE-R.ENCE.
YOU USED TSUSHIMA AS AN EXCUSE TA BRING ME TO THE BATH-HOUSES HERE.

...NO.
I DID IT...
...TO WIPE YOUR MEMORY OF HIM.

BUT IF YOU CAN SEE HIM L.VING H.S LIFE AFTER ABAN-DON.NG YOU AND THE STORE,

THEN YOU MAY BE ABLE TO MOVE FOR-WARD AGAIN.

I DON'T KNOW IF TSUSHIMA-SAN IS L.VING A HAPPY LIFE RIGHT NOW OR NOT,

...STILL ENSNARED BY TSUSHIMA-SAN.

I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE YOU...

WH-...

I'M SORRY.

寸西
WHAT ARE YA SAYING, IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
屋西

KONDOU...
DON'T MATTER IF YER AWAKE TO HEAR THIS.
I JUST FELT LIKE CHATTIN'.

I...

THE PREVIOUS HEAD LAID HIS HANDS ON ME ONCE.

I WAS FIFTEEN.

THE HEAD AWARDED THE STAFF'S HARD WORK WITH A DAY OF MOUNTAIN-HIKING.

I SERVED HIM SAKE.

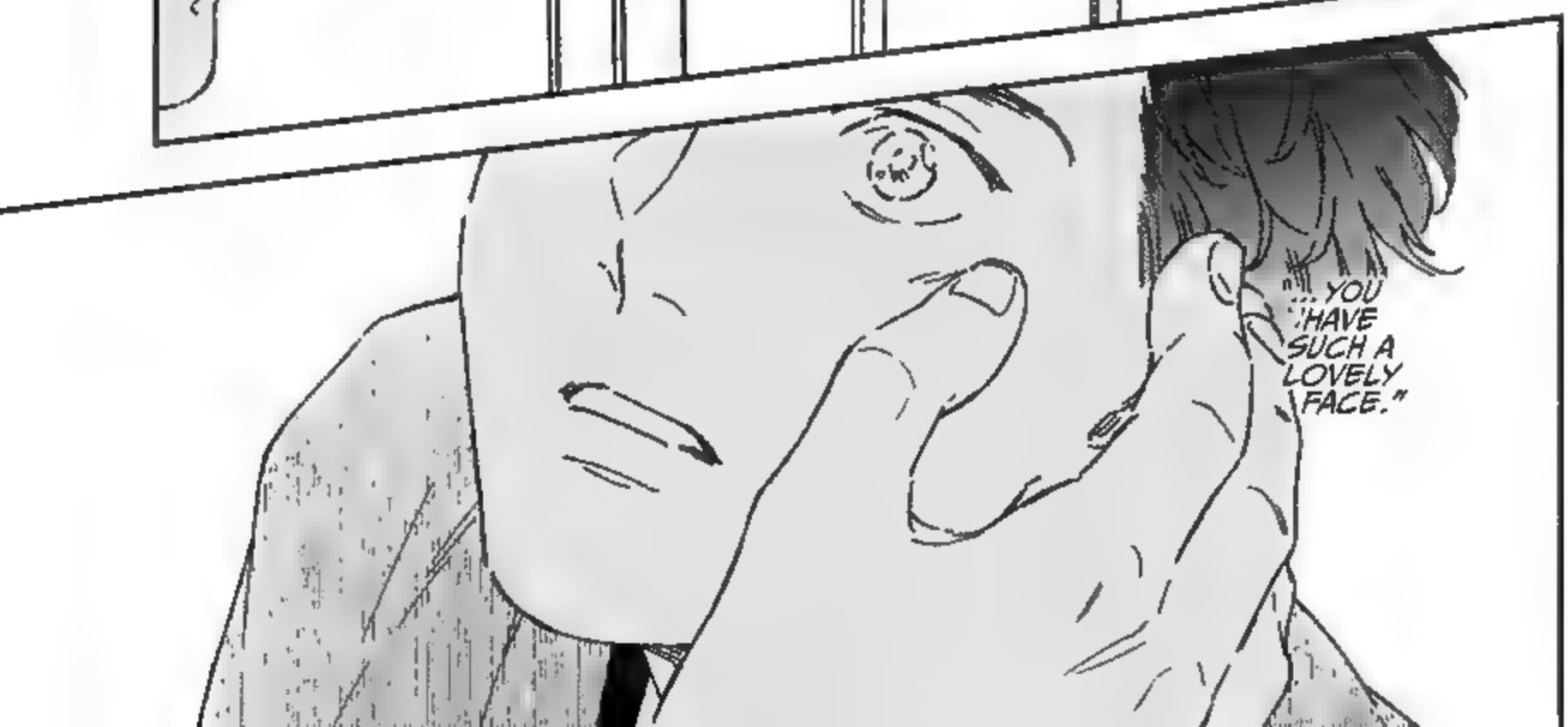
"EVER SINCE MY WIFE PASSED, THERE'S NOT BEEN ANYONE TO POUR ME A DRINK."

WHILE I ALONE STAYED BEHIND TO SERVE HIM.

"I SEE..."

"THAT MUST BE TERRIBLY LONELY."
"I CAN ACCOMPANY YOU, IF YOU'LL HAVE ME."

"I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT..."


"... YOU HAVE SUCH A LOVELY FACE."

"RYUUJI."

"I APOLOGIZE. I MUST'VE BEEN TOO DRUNK!"

BECAUSE I WAS SO FRIGHTENED, HE CAME TA HIS SENSES,

AND STOPPED MIDWAY.

"DON'T TELL NO ONE 'BOUT THIS."

THAT MIGHTA BEEN THE REASON FER HIS SPECIAL TREATMENT OF ME.

I WONDER WHAT WOULDA HAPPENED IF I SAID ANYTHIN'.

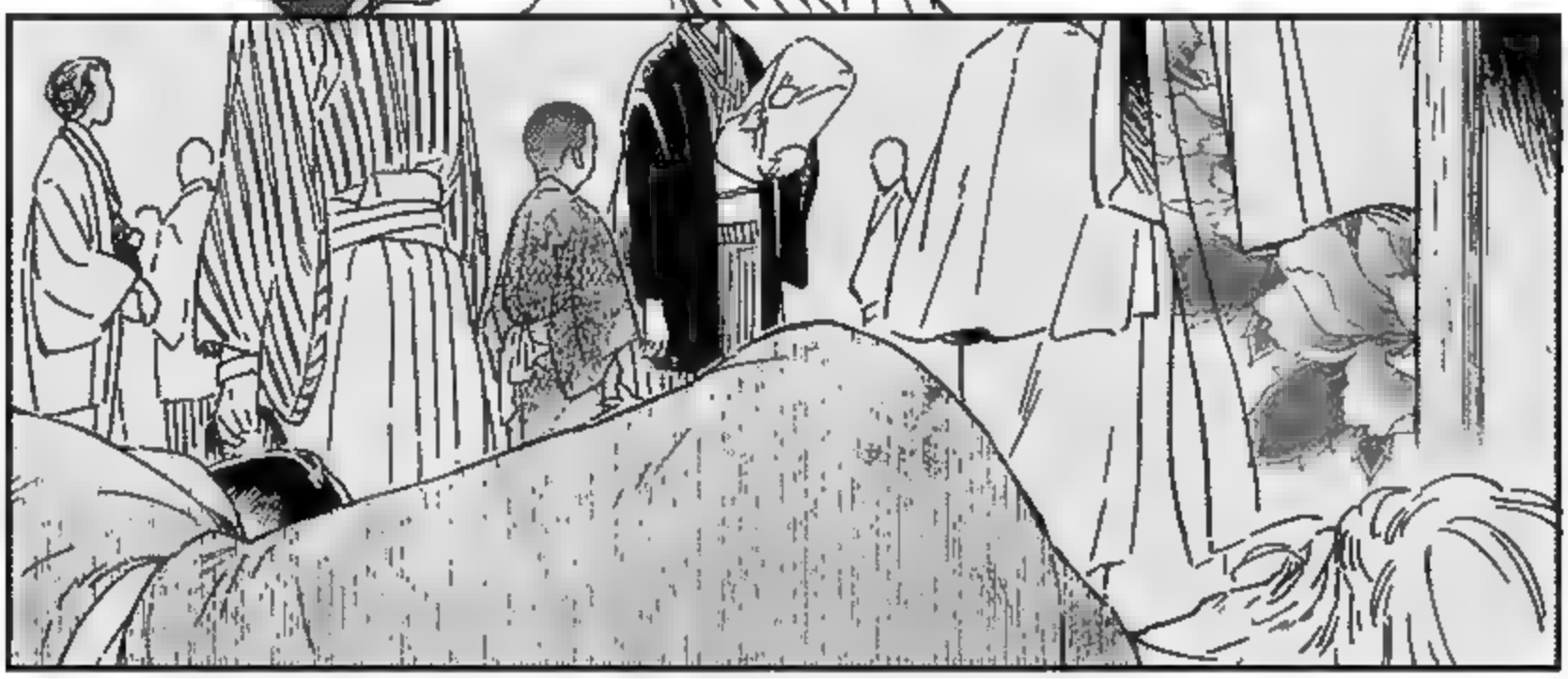
THEY M.GHTA BELIEVED ME, OR THEY M.GHTA THOUGHT IT A LOAD OF NONSENSE.

IT D.DN'T MATTER WHICH.

I WOULD NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF ANY FAMILY.

A YOUNG BOY OF AGE FIFTEEN, CHASED OUT OF A HOUSE DUE TO A SCANDAL, WOULD HAVE NOWHERE TA GO.

THE ONE TA LEAVE NAMIYA WOULDA BEEN ME.



SO I DID WHAT THE PREVIOUS HEAD ASKED ME TA DO.

EVEN IF I KNEW THAT MY EXISTENCE THREATENED TSUSHIMA'S POSITION.

I AM A CORRUPTED MAN.

IN BOTH BODY AND MIND.

YOU ENDURED IT ALL BY YOURSELF,
AND OVERCAME ALL THOSE HARDSHIPS. I HAVE NOTHING BUT...
...RESPECT FOR YOU.

HE SHOULDA BEEN THE ONE TA MARRY THE DAUGHTER AND TAKE OVER THE STORE.
FOR DESTROYIN' HIS FUTURE.
...
WHEN WE SEE TSUSHIMA TOMORROW, I WANT TA APOLOGIZE.
IT'LL BE ALRIGHT.
YOU WON'T BE ALONE TOMORROW.
ALTHOUGH, I'M STILL SLIGHTLY SCARED OF SEE.NG HIM.

To be continued

【 Chapter 5 】

INAMI-SAMA.

...YES?

TSUSHIMA IS HERE.
COME IN.

I AM TSUSHIMA.
PARDON ME.

...

HEH.

HEHEHE.

HAHA...

HAHA...

HAHA HAHA HAHA!

YOU CAN GO NOW.

TSUSHIMA-SAN,

THANK YOU FER COMIN' TA SEE US.

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.

?

SHUT

OKAY...

MASTER...

WHAT'S WRONG?

...THAT AIN'T OUR TSUSHIMA.

WE'VE GOT THE WRONG GUY.

...HUH?

SENGOKU-SAN DI'NT KNOW TSUSHIMA THAT WELL EITHER.

HE MAY'VE MADE A MISTAKE WHEN HE HEARD THE NAME.

THE WRONG GUY?

PFT

OH...

I SEE...

TWO MEN TRAVELIN' TO ARIMA, LIKE A COUPL'A MORONS.

IF THIS AIN'T THE FUNNIEST THING I'VE HAD HAPPEN TA ME IN TEN YEARS.

WHAT A RIOT.

HAH

SO WHY ARE YOU THE ONE LOOK'N' D'SAPPOINTED?

...

...NO NEED FER APOLOGIES.

I'M SO SORRY.

I'M JUST UPSET THAT I MADE YOU COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE FOR NOTHING.

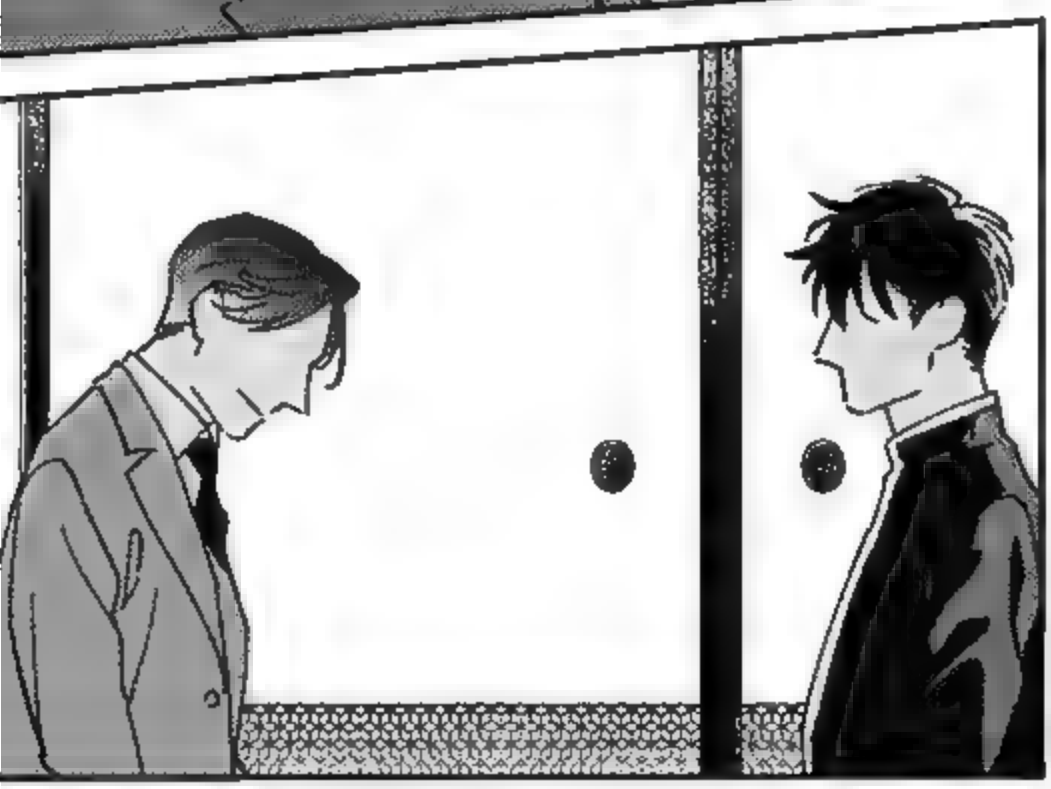
NO...

YOU MAY'VE BEEN WRONG TO BRING ME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE.

BUT YOU'RE RIGHT.

...I HAD TA COME HERE.

BUT I ALSO FELT LIKE...



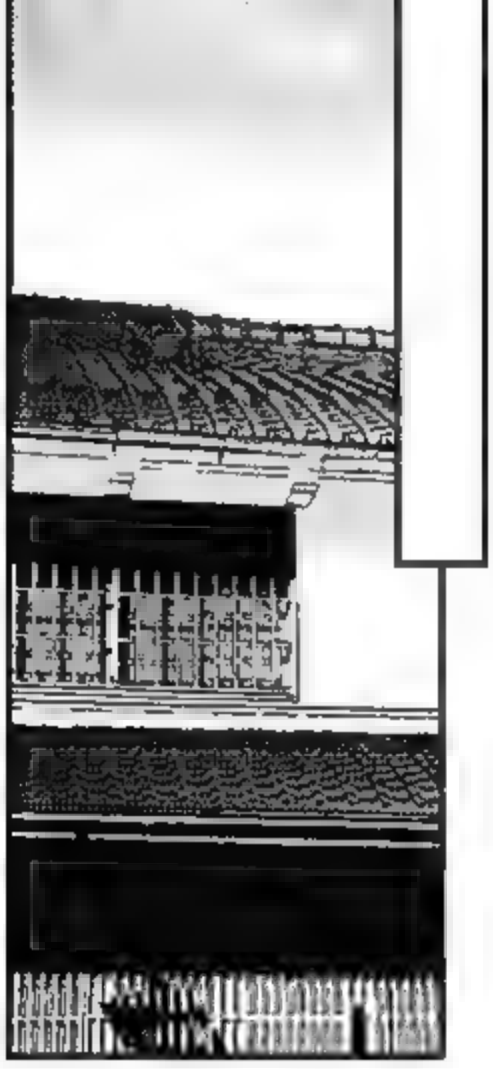
THE THING IS...

I'D BEEN ITCHIN' TA SEE HIM.

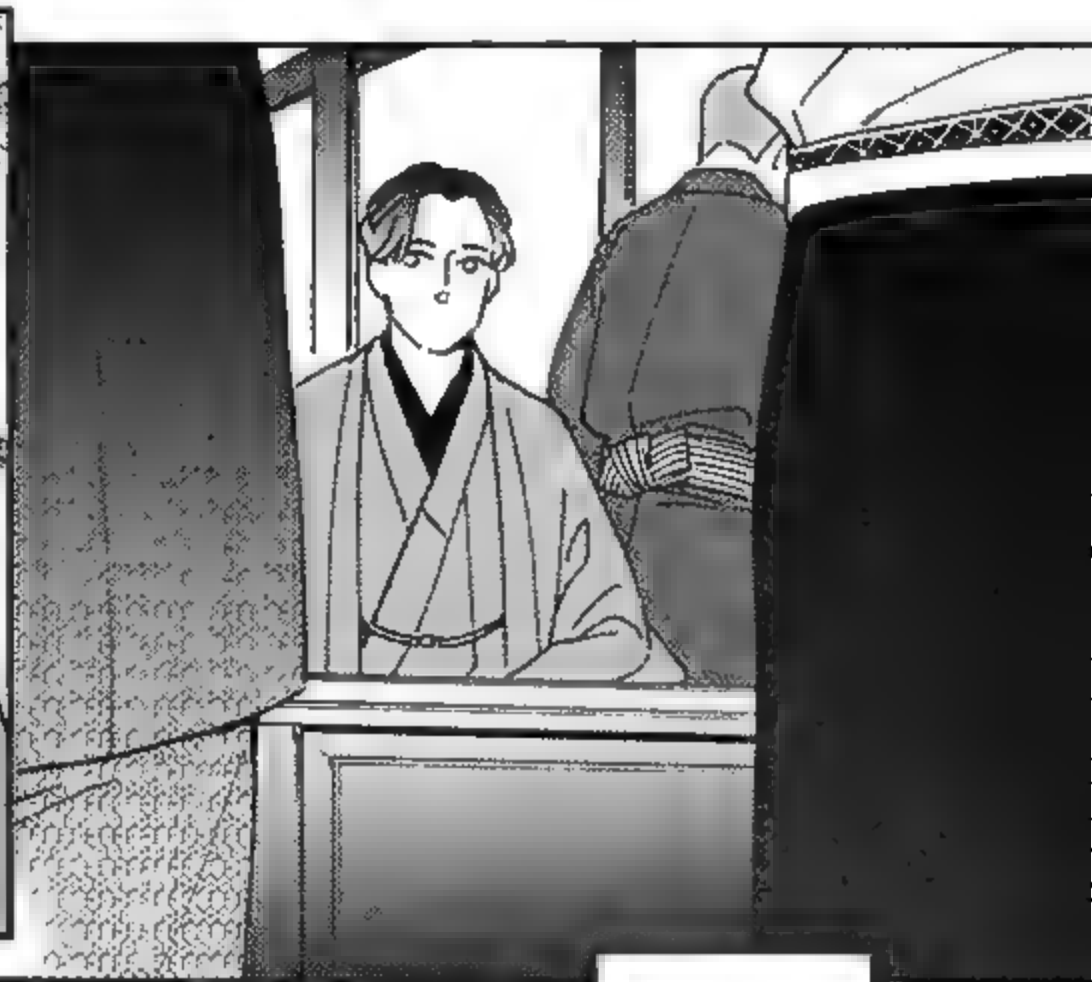
KONDOU...

I'D COME TO REALIZE THAT,

SO IT WASN'T FUTILE.

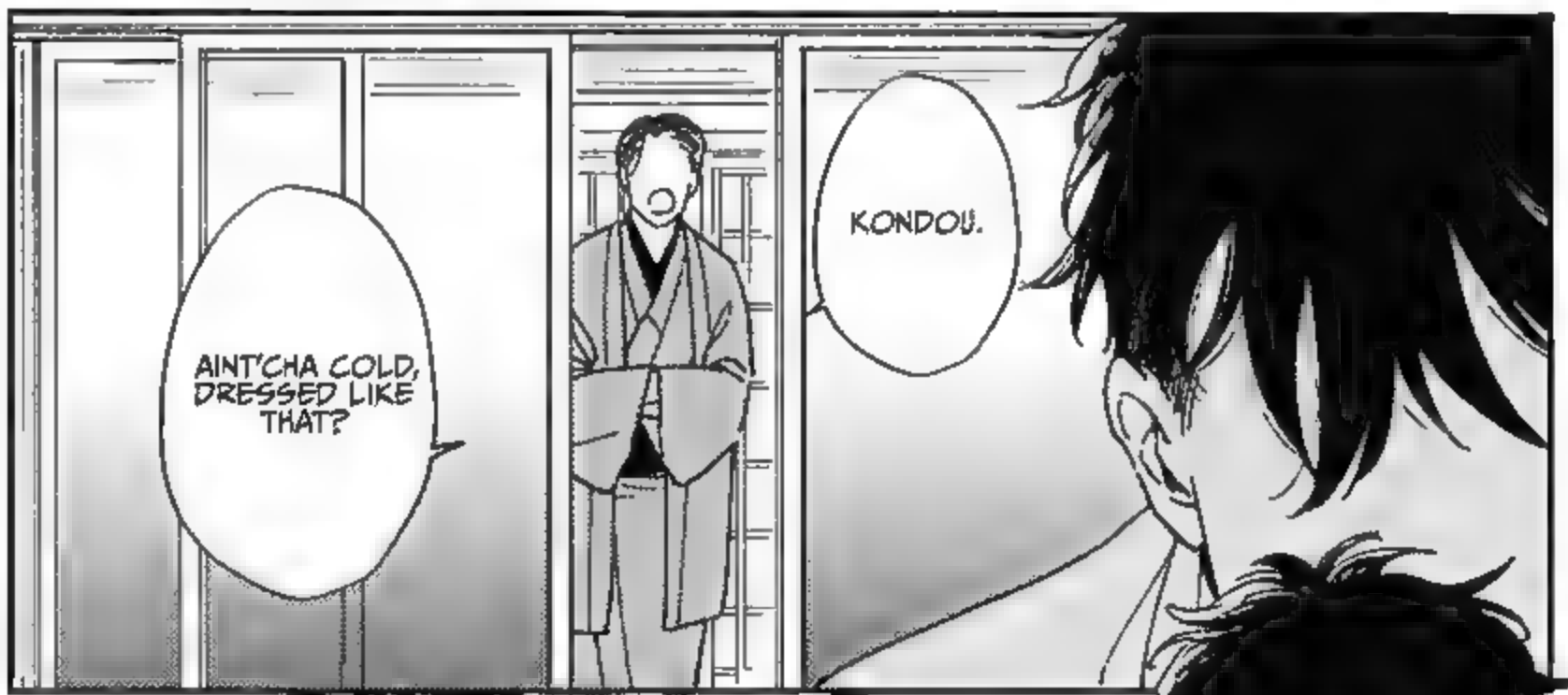


IT WAS NOT FUTILE.



On the outside, it looked like nothing had changed and that we had resumed our daily life and duties.
A week had gone by since we came back from Arima.

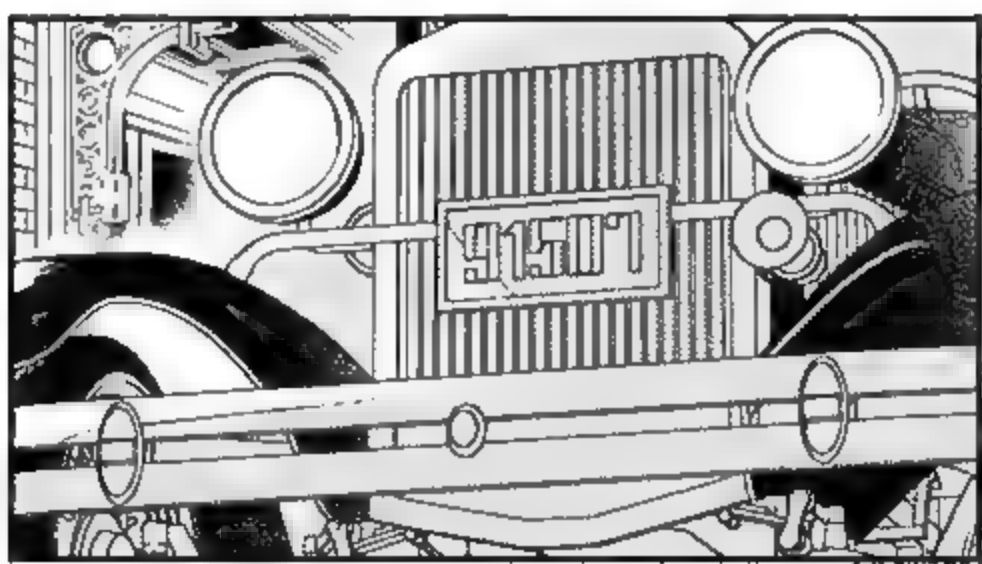
Except,

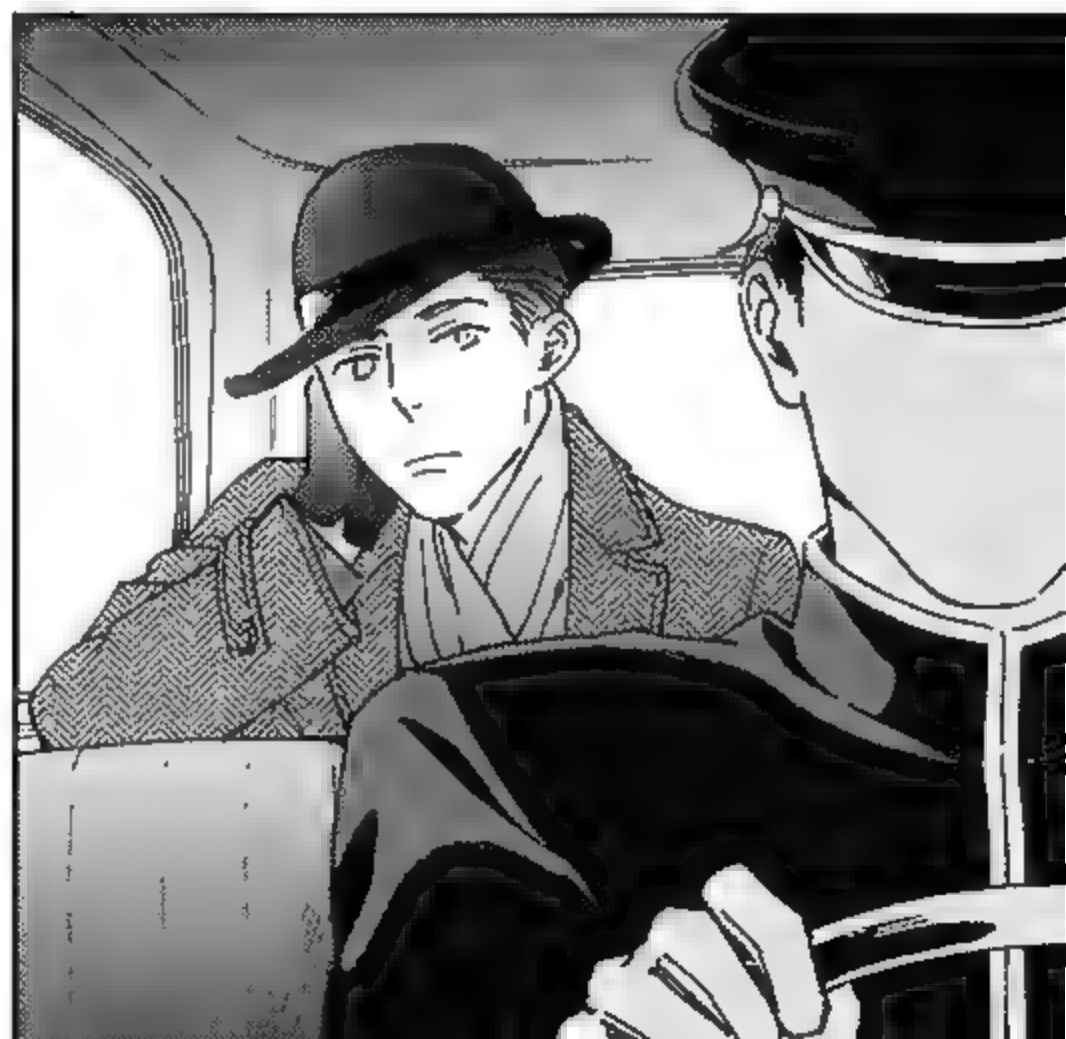

AINT'CHA COLD, DRESSED LIKE THAT?
KONDOU.

WE'RE GONNA SEE THE PREVI-OUS HEAD TOMORROW.
NO...
I'M FINE.
No,
Kondou is the only one who's changed.
OH...

I'M COUNTIN' ON YA.

I've also changed.





NO...
NOTHING.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TA TELL ME?

WE'RE HERE.
...

...COME.
NO,
I CAN'T...
HUH?

COME WITH ME.
PLEASE, KONDOU.

WHO IS THAT MAN?
RYUUJI.
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE NOTHIN'S CHANGED.
I WAS CONCERNED THAT THIS PLACE WOULD BE TERRIBLY COLD,

CHAUFFEUR?
HE HASN'T BEEN HERE LONG,
BUT HE'S BEEN A HUGE HELP.

HE'S MY NEW CHAUFFEUR.

SO...
I BROUGHT HIM HERE WITH ME TODAY.
SIR,

I AM LEAV.NG INAMIYA.

THANKFULLY, WE'VE GOT A NUMBER OF EXEMPLARY MANAGERS WITHIN THE HOUSE.

YOU WILL NO TROUBLE FINDIN' SOME-ONE TA TAKE OVER.

RYUUJI...

SO YOU DO NOT NEED TO WORRY 'BOUT THE SHOP'S FUTURE.

I WILL STAY UNTIL THE NEXT HEAD IS TRAINED,

BUT IT SHOULDN'T TAKE TOO LONG.

RYUUJI!

I DO APOLOGIZE FOR THIS SELFISH ANNOUNCEMENT.

BUT...

I'VE ALWAYS LIVED MY LIFE,

THINKING THAT I HAD TA BE A VESSEL FER YOU.

AND THAT IS DISRESPECTFUL TO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE.

SO...

THAT'S IT!

ALSO, I HAVE NO PLANS FER MARRIAGE IN THE FUTURE, EITHER.

DON'T YOU WORRY, I'LL F.ND A NICE WIFE FER YA!

YER STILL HURTIN' FROM YORIKO, THAT IT?!

...NO.

DON'T WORRY, I'LL...

THAT WAY, YOU CAN STAY HERE.

I'VE MADE MY DECISION.

I'M LEAVIN' THIS HOUSE.

THAT'S NOT T.

YOU'VE STAYED WIT' ME EVER SINCE THAT DAY...

SO I..

OR IS IT BECAUSE OF THIS MAN?

ARE YOU GOIN' TA ABANDON ME?

SIR...

IS IT BECAUSE HE'S A BETTER MAN THAN ME? IS THAT WHY?

...TAKEN IN BY THIS SHOP.

I AM...

...GLAD TO HAVE BEEN...

I AM FOREVER GRATEFUL TO YOU.

YOU GAVE AN ORPHAN LIKE ME, A HOME TA BELONG TO.

THANK YOU...
...FER EVERYTHIN'.
To be continued

AIEN CATHARSIS

by kamome oshima

A I E N C A T H A R S I S

by kamome oshima

The first time I met him,
I thought he was someone who existed on the other side of the fence.

【Final Chapter】

I began my new life in an unfamiliar place.
He even broke through the heart of my bumbling self.
I was drawn to him.

And then...

THE PAIN YOU FEEL FOR THIS INCIDENT STEMS FROM TSUSHIMA-SAN, DOESN'T IT?

THE MOMENT...

...I EXPOSED HIS TRUE FEELINGS,

I FELT A SENSE OF...

...EUPHORIA.

But,

I felt a sense of elation...
...at the prospect of him becoming mine.

...CAN BECOME STRONG ON HIS OWN.
THE THING IS...
I WAS ITCHIN' TA SEE HIM.
THIS MAN...

HE'S ABLE TO SMILE LIKE THIS.
EVEN WITHOUT MY HELP,

I felt it slipping through my fingers.
What I had thought I'd finally caught,
I WONDER ...
IF I...

PREFERRED THE MASTER OF BEFORE,

BACK WHEN HE WAS PRISONER TO HIS OWN PAST.

SORRY,

FOR TAKIN' YOU TA SEE THAT.

BUT,

I NEEDED YOU...

...TA SEE IT.

...

...SORRY.

YOU HAD TA GO ALONG WITH MY SELF-ISH ACTIONS.

IT MUST'VE BEEN QU.TE UNPLEASANT FOR YOU.

PLAYED AROUND BY AN OLD MAN...

.T MUST IAVE DIS-GUSTED YOU...

NO!

CREAK

WE'RE BACK.
MASTER...
KONDOU.

WHAT DID'JA MEAN,

WITH THAT DENIAL, EARL.ER?

AND I BEEN WANTIN' AN EXPLANAT.ON FER YOUR RECENT BEHAVIOR, TOO.

...

I'M T.RED OF FEELING LIKE THIS.

WE A.N'T LEAVIN' UNTIL I GET A SATISFY.NG ANSWER.

WHEN WE WENT TO ARIMA,

AND WHEN YOU MET WITH THE PREVIOUS HEAD...

OF MY OWN ABHORRENT HEART.

YOU GROW STRONG ALL ON YOUR OWN.

AND THAT PAINS ME...

I...

...WANTED YOU TO DEPEND ON ME.

...I AM QU.TT.NG .NAMIYA.

I CAN'T STAY BY YOUR SIDE WITH THESE FEELINGS.

KONDOU...

...IN LOVE WIT' ME?
AREN'T YOU...
...
THEN,
...YES...
OF COURSE YA'D FEEL THAT WAY.

HFF
...AN .DIOT IN THE STRANGEST WAYS.
YOU REALLY ARE...
CLICK
DO YOU TH NK THAT LOVE IS JUST...
...WISHIN' FER THE OTHER PERSON'S HAPPINESS?
CREAK

I DON'T NEED...

...SUCH A PURE AND UPSTANDING LOVE.

STOP, KONDOU.

WHY DONT'CHA TRY MAKIN' ME DEPEND ON YOU?

NGH.
CLATTACK
HAH
HAH

KON-
-DOU...
AH.
AH.

...HURRY.
RELAX.
Hah
Hah

Ngh
MORE...
I WANT...
MORE...

GIVE ME...
...ALL OF YOU.
AH
HA
AH
AH

HA...
I NEVER KNEW...
THAT DESPERATELY DESIR.N'...
...THE THINGS THAT I WANTED...

COULD FEEL SO GOOD.
HEY,
KONDOU.

YOU ARE ALSO THINKIN' FER MY SAKE.
IT'S NOT JUST...
...YER OWN SELFISH DESIRES.
...YOU KEPT BY MY SIDE.
THAT'S WHY...
YOU ALLOWED ME TA MOVE FORWARD.

THANK YOU.

REALLY?
THE MASTER IS HEADIN' TA TOKYO?
YES.

AH.
THAT'S QU.TE RE-SPECTABLE.
AN' HE'S GOIN' THERE TA MEDIATE SO THAT THE PRICES A.N'T DRIVEN UP TOO HIGH.
BECAUSE O' THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE, THE MEDICINE DISTRICT WAS MOSTLY DE-STROYED.
THEY BEEN MADE TA BUY FROM US IN OSAKA.
'CAUSE THE MAN'S ORIGINALLY FROM THERE.
AN' HE'S TAKIN' THE DR.VER, KONDOU-SAN, WIT' HIM.
SURE, BUT ONCE THEY LEAVE, IT'S SURE GON' FEEL LONESOME 'ROUND HERE.
WHAT A STRONG RESOLVE.

TSUSHIMA-SAN CAME BACK.

HEY, DID'JA HEAR?

ON TOP O' BEING IN POVERTY, YOR.KO-SAN HAS ALSO FALLEN ILL...

FER MONEY.

WHAT?! WHY NOW?

YOUNG MASTER...

HE SAID... ...THAT HE WILL MEET W.T' HIM IN THE GUEST ROOM.

WHAT ABOUT THE YOUNG MASTER?

I WONDER WHAT'S GOIN' ON.
HE SAID THAT HE W.LL GIVE THEM HIS OWN MONEY THIS TIME,
...AND WILL ASK THEM NEVER TO COME BACK TO THE STORE.
WHEN TSUSHIMA AND YORIKO-SAN LEFT THE HOUSE,
HE SEEMED AWFUL UPSET.
WILL HE BE ALRIGHT?

End

AIEN CATHARSIS

by kamome oshima

A I E N C A T H A R S I S

by kamome oshima

The night in Tokyo
April, Year 13 of the Taisho Era
...NGH.
NGH.
NGH.
HA
HA
NGH
HNGH...

HAH... CAN'T BREATHE ...

YEAH.

SORRY, ARE YOU ALRIGHT?

LIVING IN THE BARRACKS CAN BE QUITE FUN.

YES.

TRYING TO KEEP QUIET LEST THOSE IN THE NEXT ROOM HEAR, HAS ITS OWN BEAUTY.

IT WAS SOMETHING.
FERGET OUR STORE IN THE BARRACKS, HE HAD A STYLISH LITTLE WESTERN PLACE.
THE MAN WHO CAME AROUND TODAY WAS FROM THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT.
MAYBE OUR INAMIYA SHOULD WESTERN ZE ITSELF.
Hahaha.
HAH.
WHOOPS, CAN'T BE DO.N' NONE O' THAT.
I AIN'T A PART OF INAM.YA AN'MORE.

TO BE HONEST,

I WASN'T REALLY SURE ABOUT BRINGIN' YOU WIT' ME.

IT'S POSSIBLE I COULD TURN OUT LIKE TSUSHIMA,

AND SCURRY ON BACK TA INAMIYA, BEGGIN' 'EM TO TAKE ME BACK.

WASN'T LIKE I WAS STARTIN' UP A BRANCH STORE. I'D BE STARTIN' OVER WIT' NOTHING BUT THE CLOTHES ON MY BACK.

MA-
HOWEVER,
I AIN'T GOT NO RIGHT TO DRAG YOU ALONG FER THE RIDE.
AND THE MEN OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY IN TOKYO GRITTIN' THEIR TEETH AND PLOWING THROUGH...
SEEING THE STRONG-WILLED TOWN IN THE MIDST OF RESTORATION,
AFTER COMING HERE,
I KNEW THAT THIS WASN'T NO TIME FOR ME TO...
...HAVE DOUBTS AND FEARS ABOUT MY GOALS AND WHAT I WANNA ACHIEVE.

IT'S NOT BAD TO HAVE A LITTLE BIT OF FEAR IN YOU.

YOU'RE IN MY BACKYARD NOW. I WAS EXPECTING TO HAVE A BIT OF POWER OVER YOU.

ESPECIALLY WHEN WE'RE IN TOKYO NOW.

YOU DON'T GOTTA TRY TA REASON YER WAY AROUND IT.

STUPID.

TWUMP
JUST SAY THAT YOU WANT ME TA "RELY ON YOU."
I'LL TAKE YOU UP ON THAT OFFER.
AND THEN...
JUST WHAT I WANTED.
End